

SITUATION REPORT NO. 2
INCIDENT NO. 96-37
DATE: April 12, 1996 **TIME: 12:00 p.m.**

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58504

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flood. (Separate situation reports are being issued regarding Devils Lake, incident #96-01.)
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: None.
3. DAMAGE: Beginning April 8, 1996, rapid snow melt, saturated soils and ice jams have resulted in extensive localized flooding in eastern and central North Dakota. Flooding is occurring along the Sheyenne, Red, Des Lacs and Souris Rivers and their tributaries, as well as near Devils Lake (see situation reports for incident #96-01).

Flood waters are threatening roads, businesses, homes and agricultural lands.

ND Highway 46 was closed 14 miles east of Gackle, where water is flowing over the roadway. A berm has been placed along I-94 near Driscoll at Cottonwood Lake to keep water off the interstate. The North Dakota Department of Transportation has reported water on the roadways at the following locations: ND Highway 31 at the Stanton turnoff; ND Highway 200 A at its junction with US 83; ND Highway 11 two miles east of Ashley; and Highway 13 east of Wishek. The northbound Harwood rest area on I-29 has been closed due to high water.

Flood problems have been reported by local officials from Barnes, Cass, Dickey, Foster, Grand Forks, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McHenry, McIntosh, Pembina, Ramsey, Rolette, Traill, Walsh, Ward, and Wells Counties.

From throughout the state, there are reports of flood-threatened farmsteads with farmers sandbagging to protect their property. In communities individuals are reporting flooded basements due to rapid snowmelt.

As of April 9, remaining snow depths in northeastern North Dakota ranged from 12 to 21 inches. Water equivalents in Pembina County were as high as 5.9 inches. In Walsh, Pembina, Cavalier, Towner, Rolette and Bottineau counties, the snow melt and its ensuing runoff has also begun. Rivers remain ice covered. Ice jams are occurring causing localized flooding. Drainage areas such as creeks and ditches are also being dammed by ice in culverts, causing flooding of roads, agricultural lands and rural farmsteads.

Flooding on the Red River has the potential to cause major damage in Grand Forks, Walsh and Pembina counties. The Red River at Grand Forks has risen to 32.24 feet; flood stage is 28 feet. Crests of 43 to 44 feet are forecast for April 17 or 18.

In the city of Pembina, the forecast calls for the Red River to crest between 45 and 48.5 feet; flood stage is 42 feet. The Pembina River at Neche is forecast to crest between 19 and 20.5 feet; flood stage is 18 feet. The flood of record was 23.5 feet in 1979.

The flood stage of the Sheyenne River at Valley City is 13 feet. According to the National Weather Service, the river is predicted to crest in Valley City at 16 feet on April 17-18. Currently, the river is at 13 feet. At Lisbon, the Sheyenne River is predicted to crest at 16.5 feet April 17-18; flood stage is 11 feet. At Kindred, flood stage is 16 feet. A crest of 21 feet is predicted for April 17-18. At Lisbon and Kindred, rural flooding is anticipated.

To reduce damage, all of these river levels require significant local flood-fight actions in nearby communities to include pumping, sandbag operations, some diking, gate closures and detours to reduce damage.

LaMoure County officials reported over 250 roadway sites where water is threatening the integrity of road beds.

Logan County officials report over 160 roadway sites where water is threatening the integrity of roadbeds. A farmhouse basement at Lehr collapsed because of water surrounding the home.

Foster County officials report over 29 roads are under water.

In Rolette County, plugged culverts and above normal runoff is causing water to flow over roads.

In rural Grand Forks County, ice jams on the Turtle River caused localized flooding, which resulted in sanitary sewers backing up into homes. The city of Grand Forks is experiencing widespread water problems, including flooded basements and streets. The English Coulee overflowed, threatening homes and causing street closure.

McIntosh County officials have reported nearly 30 roadway sites impacted by flood waters.

In northern Ward County, runoff is flooding basements in Carpio because of an ice jam on the Des Lacs River. In Donnybrook, one home is inundated and two additional homes are threatened.

Walsh County officials report they have 12 miles of roads closed because of water running over these roads. Local officials indicated that if rivers in Walsh County crest at levels predicted, ensuing road damage could reach \$1/2 million.

A half-mile long ice jam on the Maple River at Enderlin threatened two homes, requiring sandbagging operations.

Along the Sheyenne River at Fort Ransom, three homeowners reported water in the basement, with one home experiencing sewage backup problems.

A major ice jam extending from the Olson Bridge in Fort Ransom south to Lisbon, is being monitored.

Overland flooding is reported by Cass County officials in the Argusville area due to frozen ditches and culverts. Property affected is primarily farm land but township and county roads in the area have water flowing over the roadway. Farmsteads in the vicinity are threatened.

Traill County officials report they have 50 different sites on county and township roads that have been closed because of water running over the roadway. A culvert and a bridge approach have been washed away.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: County emergency managers, county commissions, county highway departments, county water boards, township boards, local law enforcement, city mayors, city public works departments, fire departments, local radio and television stations, and newspapers.

STATE: The North Dakota State Water Commission, Civil Air Patrol, the North Dakota Department of Transportation, North Dakota State Highway Patrol, North Dakota State Radio Communications, the North Dakota National Guard and the North Dakota Division of Emergency Management have reported information/activity.

FEDERAL: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies and the National Weather Service.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: Volunteers in affected communities are assisting with sandbagging operations. At Grand Forks, Grand Forks Air Force Base volunteers are assisting the city's sandbagging operations and the American Red Cross is providing meals for the volunteers. The Red Cross is providing clean-up kits to affected homeowners in Ransom County, Burlington and Carpio.

Red Cross disaster officials have been briefed by State Emergency Management staff.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Throughout eastern and central North Dakota, officials are closely monitoring river levels and road conditions being threatened by flood waters. Flood watches and warnings are being issued where necessary. Pumping, flagging, sandbag operations, road closing, and freeing culverts of ice are among the most prevalent emergency actions.

The St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is providing technical, mechanical, supply material, and emergency flood-fight assistance in conjunction with its interests and authorities along the impacted waterways.

At least, 3,000 cfs (cubic feet per second) are entering the Lake Ashtabula reservoir on the Sheyenne River, requiring the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release 2,500 cfs of water from Bald Hill Dam. These releases combined with local runoff have necessitated flood-fight actions in Valley City.

On April 11, 1996, the Harwood City Council issued an emergency declaration. City officials are pumping internal drainage to prevent flooding.

The Civil Air Patrol is on standby to provide surveillance flights.

National Guard resources have been alerted for potential support to local authorities. Camp Grafton officials are storing and dispatching equipment and supplies.

In Rolette County, a road has been cut to move flood waters.

Pembina County officials in extreme northeast North Dakota are preparing for high river levels along the Red and Pembina rivers and their tributaries. They have inventoried sandbags and pumps and have purchased additional flood-fighting supplies. The city of Pembina has activated its emergency planning committee to coordinate the flood fight. The Drayton Fire Department conducted a training session on emergency diking and sandbagging.

In Grand Forks, local officials (city and county) have declared an emergency and are preparing plans for a temporary dike on Belmont Road. The decision to build the dike will be finalized later today as forecasts are revised for Grand Forks. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will assist the city in this effort to protect their existing project. They've had a pretty significant flood fight: pumping, filling and laying sandbags, closing floodgates, etc.

Grafton city officials held a flood preparedness meeting on April 10. Participants included county emergency management, law enforcement, public utilities and city officials. Sandbags and sand are being stockpiled in Minto and Grafton.

Throughout eastern and central North Dakota, local radio and television stations are providing emergency public information relating to the flood threat. Newspapers are providing awareness information.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The City of Grand Forks has placed in operation a new sandbag filling machine capable of filling 5,000 sandbags per hour. They are placing the filled sandbags on semi-trailer trucks to be transported as needed.

Signed _____
Douglas C. Friez
State Director